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REMARKS

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-28 and 32-95 remain pending in the present application. Claims 1-28 are amended. Claims 29-31 are cancelled without prejudice, waiver or disclaimer. New claims 32-95 are added. It is believed that the foregoing amendments add no new matter to the present application. Reconsideration and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested.

Amendment to Specification - Cross Reference to Related Applications

Applicant has amended the specification to reference related applications in accordance with proper practice under the MPEP. These related applications are directed to different claimed inventions, but there is overlap in the disclosures.

Cancellation of Withdrawn Claims

Due to an election without traverse by applicant in connection with a restriction requirement by the USPTO, claims 29-31 were withdrawn from examination. Applicant cancels these claims herein without prejudice, waiver, and/or disclaimer, and reserves the right to pursue this subject matter in continuing applications, if the applicant so chooses.

General Note on Pending Claims

Note that *method* claims 1-28, 32-49 generally correspond with *system* claims 50-95, respectively.

Allowed Claims 1-7, 18-20 (and New Claims 50-56, 67-69)

Applicant acknowledges the indication of allowance of claims 1-7 and 18-20 in the Office Action.

Applicant has added new claims 50-56, 67-69, respectively, which correspond to similar subject matter, but which are directed to a "computer-based notification system" that implements the corresponding methods that were allowed. Accordingly, new claims 50-56, 67-69 should be allowed for at least the same reasons as allowed claims 1-7, 18-20.

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Additionally, the new claims 50-56, 67-69 are written in means plus function format, so that their respective means plus function elements will likely be interpreted pursuant to 35 U.S.C. Section 112, sixth paragraph, so that structure is imputed into the claims (unlike their respective method counterparts). These imputed structural limitations also make the claims allowable over the prior art of record.

Allowable Claims 9, 12, and 17 (and New Claims 32-37, 38-43, 44-49, 78-83, 84-89, 90-95)

Applicant acknowledges the indication in the Office Action of the allowability of the original claims 9, 12, and 17.

New independent claim 32 corresponds with allowable claim 9. Claim 32 should be allowed along with its dependant claims 33-37.

New independent claim 38 corresponds with allowable claim 12. Claim 38 should be allowed along with its dependant claims 39-43.

New independent claim 44 corresponds with allowable claim 17. Claim 44 should be allowed along with its dependant claims 45-49.

Applicant has also added new claims 78-83, 84-89, 90-95 which correspond respectively with claims 32-37, 38-43, 44-49, but which are directed to a "computer-based notification system". These new claims 78-83, 84-89, 90-95 are allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 21-28.

Additionally, the new claims 78-83, 84-89, 90-95 are written in means plus function format, so that their respective means plus function elements will likely be interpreted pursuant to 35 U.S.C. Section 112, sixth paragraph, so that structure is imputed into the claims (unlike their respective method counterparts). These imputed structural limitations also make the claims allowable over the prior art of record.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 21, 24, and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as allegedly being anticipated by Sebanc (U.S. Patent No. 6,943,679). Applicants respectfully disagree with the Office Action's contention that Sebanc teaches "refraining from sending a notification communication to the party's personal communications device after receiving the response

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communication (col. 7, lines 4-10)." The passage cited in support of this contention indicates, to the contrary, that the transmitter 55 associated with the response unit 40 ceases transmission. It does not teach that the central control unit 10 ceases transmission. Second, it is unclear whether the central control unit 10 refrains from sending communications to the response unit 40 *before* or *after* the response is received from the response unit 40 from the central control unit 10.

Furthermore, applicant has amended independent claim 21 as follows:

21. A method for communications in connection with a computer-based notification system, comprising:
storing contact data in memory pertaining to one or more party personal communications devices;
initiating a notification communication to a personal communications device associated with a party based upon the contact data;
receiving a response communication from the party's personal communications device;
changing the contact data based upon the response communication; and
modifying a manner in which future notification communications are implemented, based upon the change in the contact data.

Sebanc and the other prior art of record fail to disclose or teach at least the above-highlighted additional features. Accordingly, independent claim 21 is allowable over Sebanc for at least this additional reason, and its dependent claims 22-28 are also allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 21.

Applicant has also added new claims 70-77 which correspond to claims 21-28, respectively, but which are directed to a "computer-based notification system". These new claims 70-77 are allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 21-28.

Additionally, the new claims 70-77 are written in means plus function format, so that their respective means plus function elements will likely be interpreted pursuant to 35 U.S.C. Section 112, sixth paragraph, so that structure is imputed into the claims (unlike their respective method counterparts). These imputed structural limitations also make the claims allowable over the prior art of record.

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Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 8, 10-11, 14-16, 22-23, 25, and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sebanc in view of Chaum (U.S. Publication 2003/0091158). As stated previously, Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Office Action's contention that Sebanc teaches the refraining step.

Furthermore, Applicant has amended independent claim 8 as follows:

8. A method for communications in connection with a computer-based notification system, comprising:
storing contact data in memory pertaining to one or more party personal communications devices;
initiating a first notification communication to a personal communications device associated with a party based upon the contact data;
receiving a response communication from the party's personal communications device;
changing the contact data based upon the response communication;
refraining from sending notification communications to the party's personal communications device based upon the change in the contact data;
initiating a second notification communication to the party's personal communications device, one or more other personal communications devices, or both, after detection of occurrence of one or more events.

Claim 8 is allowable for at least the additional reason that none of the prior art of record teaches the above-highlighted features. Thus, independent claim 8, and its dependent claims 9-17 are allowable.

New claims 57-66 have been added and correspond respectively with claims 8-17, but which are directed to a "computer-based notification system." The new claims 57-66 are allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 8-17.

Additionally, the new claims 57-66 are written in means plus function format, so that their respective means plus function elements will likely be interpreted pursuant to 35 U.S.C. Section 112, sixth paragraph, so that structure is imputed into the claims (unlike their respective method counterparts). These imputed structural limitations also make the claims allowable over the prior art of record.

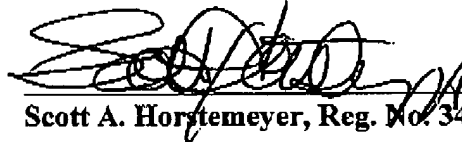
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CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that all objections and/or rejections have been traversed, rendered moot, and/or accommodated, and that the now pending claims 1-28 and 32-95 are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned agent at (770) 933-9500.

Respectfully submitted,



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